

STATE OF ARIZONA  
ARIZONA AUTOMOBILE  
THEFT AUTHORITY  
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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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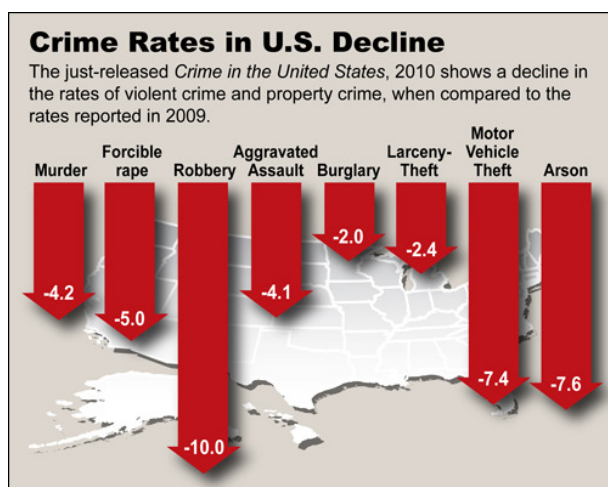
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## **ARIZONA'S AUTO THEFT RATE DOWN OVER 17%**

**PHOENIX** – According to 2010 crime figures released by the FBI this week, the largest property crime decline nationally was for motor vehicle thefts: a 7.4% decrease from the 2009 figure. Arizona reported 21,508 stolen cars in 2010, a 17.2% decrease from 2009 and the eighth consecutive year for a statewide decrease. Overall, Arizona ranked sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) in the nation for vehicle thefts per capita and eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) for total stolen vehicles.



Authorities attribute the continued decline to a combination of factors including new technologies like bait cars, proactive law enforcement strategies, and multi-agency cooperation. Vehicle owner-applied theft deterrent and recovery systems are also delivering outstanding results.

"The coordinated efforts of everyone involved are working and our state's continued decrease is proof of this," stated Brian R. Salata, Executive

Director, Arizona Auto Theft Authority (AATA). "Our law enforcement and criminal justice partners have made incredible strides in the battle against auto theft."

"Auto theft has evolved into a multi-faceted crime that is mainly driven by high profits with low risk. Organized criminals are increasingly involved in stealing vehicles, altering their identity and selling to unsuspecting consumers," stated Salata. The Arizona Vehicle Theft Task Force is presently working with local, state and federal agencies to thwart smuggling activities by the cartels operating south of our border. Last year, the Task Force recovered 1,455 vehicles worth over \$20 million; hundreds of suspects were arrested and dozens of chop shops shut down.

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Authorities remind the public that auto theft is a crime of opportunity; in order to put thieves out of business and keep from becoming a victim, we must remain vigilant in our efforts. The AATA recommends a “layered approach” protection plan:

#### **Layer #1 -- Common Sense**

- Park Smart - Always lock your car, close all windows and take the keys.
- Avoid vehicle burglaries - do not leave valuables in vehicle or make certain they're not in plain view.
- Never leave your vehicle running unattended.
- Park in high foot traffic, well lighted areas or attended lots - car thieves do not like witnesses.
- Do not hide a spare set of keys in the car - the pros know where to look.
- If you have a garage, use it.

#### **Layer #2 -- Visible & Audible Warning Devices**

The second layer of protection is any device that can be SEEN or HEARD and alerts thieves that your vehicle is protected. Some popular examples include:

- Audible alarms, steering wheel locks, brake locks
- **Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) etching on vehicle windows – visit the AATA’s website ([www.azwatchyourcar.com](http://www.azwatchyourcar.com) – Events calendar) for a list of upcoming events.**

#### **Layer #3 – Immobilizers**

The third layer of protection is immobilizer devices which prevent thieves from bypassing your ignition and hot-wiring the vehicle. Some popular devices include:

- Kill switches
- Starter, ignition and fuel disablers
- Smart keys
- High security locks & keys
- Fuse cut-offs

#### **Layer #4 -- Tracking Devices**

The final layer of protection is a tracking device which emits a signal to a police or monitoring station when the vehicle is reported stolen. Tracking devices are very effective in helping authorities recover stolen vehicles.

For additional information about the Arizona Automobile Theft Authority, visit [www.azwatchyourcar.com](http://www.azwatchyourcar.com).

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